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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Prime Minister Chou En-lai
Ch'iao Kuan-hua, Vice Foreign Minister
Chi Chao-chu, Interpreter
Tang Wen-sheng, Interpreter

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs
Winston Lord, NSC Staff

DATE & TIME:

Monday, June 19, 1972; 10:25 - 11:20 p.m.

PLACE:

Guest House #5, Peking

Dr. Kissinger: This was where it all began.

Prime Minister Chou: With the same participants (Lord and Pineau, the stenographer).

Dr. Kissinger: No, Miss Pineau was not on the first trip. I had no idea what we would find here when I came.

Prime Minister Chou: You are probably familiar by now.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, now. And now I always look forward to it very much.

Prime Minister Chou: Yes, it's almost one year, I believe.

Dr. Kissinger: I was accused in a New York Times article of conducting a China-first policy two days ago.

Prime Minister Chou: Oh, is that true? We haven't seen that editorial.

Dr. Kissinger: I will give it to you. I have a copy.

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Japanese interest. We don't look at China as a big market. But we are prepared to use it as a symbol of the equality vis-a-vis the other countries with which we are prepared to trade of the People's Republic, and for whatever use it can be in establishing such links. The same is true in science, agriculture, technology, medicine, etc.

But in this respect I have one particular problem. The problem as I have looked at the Paris channel is that at least in our government very many projects have come up one at a time, and from our point of view become unmanageable in relationship to any political objective. I don't know how it is with you, but that's how it is with us. So we thought that if we could create some commissions in various fields -- some joint commissions say in agriculture, economics and science -- then we could give directives to our members of these commissions in a general political sense rather than have fifty projects a month that come to us and are very difficult to relate one to another. And then the commission could sort out the individual problems.

If this idea commends itself to you, then Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Solomon and Mr. Holdridge can discuss the details with whomever you designate. But we are also prepared to continue on this present basis. It seemed to us a more efficient way of proceeding.

Prime Minister Chou: Of course, that is a bilateral matter.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

Prime Minister Chou: That belongs to the bilateral field.

Dr. Kissinger: Exactly, but I wanted to explain to you what our general strategy is, and why I am raising it with you rather than leaving it entirely to the bilateral field. We are in no particular hurry. It is simply growing out of our understanding of what the strategy of some other countries may be. //

Prime Minister Chou: The second point I would like to ask is, has there been any progress made in the Paris talks with the Vietnamese?

Dr. Kissinger: No, at this moment the Paris talks are suspended and there is no fixed date for the resumption. We have proposed, and this is

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confidential, we have proposed to the North Vietnamese that there be a private meeting between Le Duc Tho and me on June 28 and have stated that if there is such a meeting its purpose would be to prepare for the resumption of plenary sessions. We have not yet received a reply.

But the real problem, Mr. Prime Minister, is not whether the talks resume but what we are going to talk about when they do resume. The tragedy is -- as I have told you before and I know we don't agree, but I have to be honest -- the North Vietnamese are very heroic but they are not wise. They are acting as if Dulles were still alive and as if they had to protect themselves against Dulles. There is no solution to this problem if they insist that everything must be settled at once. If they could do what you have done -- to separate those issues which must be taken care of immediately from those which should be settled by history, the war would be over in a month. Because we have no permanent objectives in Indochina.

Prime Minister Chou: I also mentioned Dulles to Fairbank. I admitted that I had made a mistake when I met with the five American families that evening. I didn't have time to meet them individually, so I had to put them together.

Dr. Kissinger: Which families?

Prime Minister Chou: Fairbank, Cohen, Stone, Salisbury and Dudman.

Dr. Kissinger: I will hear from them, Mr. Prime Minister, without any question when I come back to America.

Prime Minister Chou: You also mentioned you would like to see Mr. Fairbank.

Dr. Kissinger: Oh, for 15 minutes some time.

Vice Foreign Minister Ch'iao: He is now in Peking. He is going to leave for other places, but he is now in Peking.

Dr. Kissinger: If there's a free half-hour.

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Prime Minister Chou: On the first day Mr. Fairbank came he told Mr. Ch'iao he had met you before he came to China. The core of his point was to get Chinese students to go to his research center in Harvard.

Dr. Kissinger: He is a very single-minded man. But, of course, he is also an old friend.

Prime Minister Chou: This time I would like to discuss this issue more with you, the issue of Vietnam. Because you are always trying to compare them with us. This is a different thing. You are a very practical statesman so you know the situation is different.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, we will discuss it any time the Prime Minister wishes.

Prime Minister Chou: But Podgorny on his return to the Soviet Union from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam said he had suggested if the hostilities could stop...if a cease-fire could be entered, together with the bombing and the blockade stopped...we don't know whether that was something you discussed with the Soviet Union. Because he said that openly.

Dr. Kissinger: I have not seen the text of his statement. I can tell you what was discussed with the Soviet Union. I cannot comment on what he said. If you have a text, I will be glad to comment on it.

Prime Minister Chou: We also saw a few press releases. Le Duc Tho passed through China the day before yesterday; I also met him yesterday. I hadn't met Podgorny either. He might have met him... Podgorny might have left after Mr. Le Duc Tho went back. But we don't know. At that time Le Duc Tho hadn't gotten news of Podgorny's statement. And, of course, I had neither the responsibility nor right to discuss how they were going to proceed. But we assessed the situation together.

So in the future when we have this specific topic of Vietnam I can say more about that. Because if what Podgorny said had already been accepted by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam then it seemed close to what you said. He mentioned a ceasefire in place on the one hand, and on the other hand there will also be a simultaneous cessation of bombing. But we will get the English text.

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Dr. Kissinger: What we discussed with the Soviet leaders was an explanation of our May 8 proposal. And we secondly discussed how, if the North Vietnamese insist that there also be a political solution, how the May 8 proposal could be combined with the January 27 proposal, the eight points. We didn't discuss with the Soviet leaders a separate ceasefire that did not involve prisoners. But a ceasefire that included some arrangement for the prisoners we would be extremely interested in discussing, and we would be very flexible in... we would not at all exclude a ceasefire-in-place. (Prime Minister Chou nods.)

But we have not received any official information either from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam or from the Soviet Union as to what was discussed in Hanoi.

Interpreter: In Vietnam?

Dr. Kissinger: In Hanoi.

Prime Minister Chou: We haven't received any either.

Dr. Kissinger: But when we do discuss Vietnam we should discuss it from the aspect that we are not looking for excuses to extend the war and are not looking to inflict a military defeat on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Prime Minister Chou: And beside the question of Japan we would also like to discuss the issue of Korea.

Dr. Kissinger: All right.

Prime Minister Chou: I would only like to ask you one thing. Do you not oppose China discussing with Japan the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations?

Dr. Kissinger: I favor it.

Prime Minister Chou: Yes, I saw from the Japanese reports something to that effect. I would like to confirm them.

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